

★
No. 5573.1H9

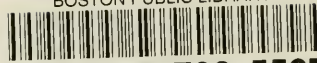
239-2H6



GIVEN BY

U. S. SUPT. OF DOCUMENTS

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 05708 5597

✓ 5573.149
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary
CHILDREN'S BUREAU - KATHARINE F. LENROOT, Chief

+

A
HISTORICAL SUMMARY
OF
STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN
IN
ALABAMA

+

Bureau Publication No. 239

Part 3



UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1938

31 SUPERINTENDENT

AUG 24 1938



CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Foreword | v |
| The State and its administration | 1 |
| Development of State welfare administration | 4 |
| State child-welfare department | 4 |
| State board of control and economy | 5 |
| State board of administration | 6 |
| State prison inspector | 7 |
| State hospital system | 8 |
| Proposed reorganization of State welfare services | 8 |
| The State child-welfare department | 10 |
| Development of services | 10 |
| State child-welfare commission | 11 |
| Organization of the department | 12 |
| Director of the department | 12 |
| Divisional organization | 12 |
| Activities of the divisions | 12 |
| Division of county organization | 12 |
| Division of child care | 13 |
| Division of institutions | 14 |
| Division of child labor | 14 |
| Educational activities and publications | 14 |
| Personnel of the department | 16 |
| State services for children | 18 |
| Development of local public-welfare services for children | 18 |
| County boards of child welfare | 18 |
| Local public support for children | 21 |
| Care of dependent children | 22 |
| Children under care of the State child-welfare department | 22 |
| State supervisory services | 24 |
| Services for special groups of dependent children | 27 |
| Care of mentally handicapped and problem children | 29 |
| Care of delinquent children | 30 |
| Institutional provisions | 30 |
| Other services for delinquent children | 31 |
| Care of physically handicapped children | 32 |
| Blind and deaf children | 32 |
| Crippled children | 33 |

FOREWORD

This publication is intended for students of public-welfare administration who wish to understand the development of State welfare programs. Several States were studied, and the report for each State is being issued separately.

Material changes have occurred during the past few years in organization and services in Alabama, but the present program has developed from past experience. Therefore, it seems of value to issue for students of the subject this report of the development of State services for children. The picture given is of Alabama in 1934, and it should not be understood to represent the present situation.

A Historical Summary of State Services for Children in Alabama

THE STATE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

Alabama is one of the oldest States of the Union. Organized as a Territory in March 1817, it was admitted to the Union in December 1819 as the twenty-second State. With each census its population has shown an increase over the preceding census, until in 1930 its inhabitants numbered 2,646,248, or 51.6 persons per square mile. The population is largely native, 36 percent of it being Negro. The Negro population is not evenly distributed; it ranges from 0.6 percent in Winston County to 85 percent in Lowndes County.

Alabama is predominantly rural. In 1930 it had more than 17,000,000 acres in farm land, valued at over \$354,000,000. Only 14 cities in the State had a population as large as 10,000 in 1930, the three largest being Birmingham with 259,678 inhabitants, Mobile with 68,202, and Montgomery with 66,079. According to the 1930 census, 72 percent of the population were living in rural areas, about 50 percent of them in rural-farm areas.

Agriculture is the chief industry, and cotton the principal crop. In 1931 the State produced about one-twelfth of the entire cotton crop of the United States.¹ Alabama ranks high not only in the producing but also in the spinning of cotton. Its textile mills are among the best in equipment and efficiency. During 1928 one-half the spindles installed in the United States were placed in Alabama. In the past 30 years the mineral industries of the State have been developed to a large extent. The mineral district, centering around Birmingham, produces iron and has one of the largest coal fields in the country. The river system of Alabama makes it one of the leading States in the amount of potential water power, and some large hydroelectric power plants have been built. A large section of the State lies within the Tennessee Valley development. Alabama also produces large quantities of lumber.²

With its large Negro population, for whom educational opportunities have come slowly, it is not strange that the rate of illiteracy has been high in Alabama. The percentage of illiterates in the population 10 years of age and over in 1930 was 13, about 5 percent of the white population and 26 percent of the Negro population being illiterate. Excellent progress has been made in recent years in reducing the amount of illiteracy.

¹ Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1933, p. 601. U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Washington, 1933.

² Alabama, pp. 7-11. Report of the Alabama Industrial Development Board (Division of State Department of Agriculture and Industries), Birmingham, 1929.

The Governor of the State is elected for a term of 4 years. Elections for Governor and State legislators are held at the same time, the legislature meeting every 4 years at the beginning of the Governor's term. The State government was administered at the time of this study by 90 separate departments, boards, commissions, or officials in addition to the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor.³ Many of these State agencies had limited and minor functions; others had broad control over State activities. The secretary of State, the attorney general, the State auditor, the State treasurer, the State superintendent of education, the commissioner of agriculture and industries, the commissioner of games and fisheries, and the public-service commissioner were elected by popular vote.⁴ Alabama has made rather extensive use of ex officio membership on State boards and commissions, some of which were composed entirely of ex officio members, although others also included members appointed by the Governor. The large number of elective offices and the fairly limited appointive power of the Governor have resulted in divided administrative control in the State.

In 1931 the legislature authorized a survey of State and local administration.⁵ This survey was made by the Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, which submitted a report⁶ to the Governor in 1932. The report recommended complete reorganization of State and county government, including the centralization of State administration under the Governor, the reorganization of State services under 17 major departments supplemented by a small number of independent commissions or boards, and reorganization of the structure of county administration with closer relation between State and county administration.⁷ No action had been taken on these recommendations up to the time of this study, because there had been no regular session of the legislature since the authorization of the survey.⁸

The county is the major local governmental unit in Alabama. The governing body of a county is a court of county commissioners, a board of revenue, a county commission, or a board of commissioners. The general law established a court of county commissioners⁹ for each county as the governing body, but through special local laws it is possible for any county to adopt the type of governing body that it desires. At the time this study was made the administrative authority in about two-thirds of the counties was a court of county commissioners, which was composed of the judge of the probate court

³ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 1, pt. 1 (State Government), pp. 61-68. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

⁴ Constitution, art. V, sec. 114, General Acts of 1923, No. 601; Code of 1923, secs. 9605, 9606.

⁵ General Acts of 1931, No. 5, p. 3.

⁶ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vols. 1-5. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (State Government), pp. 20-42, 85-90.

⁸ In August 1935 the Alabama department of public welfare was created by the legislature. The aim of this department is "the promotion of a unified development of the welfare activities and agencies of the State and of the local government so that each agency and each governmental institution shall function as an integral part of a general system." All powers, duties, and responsibilities of the State child-welfare department were transferred to the department of public welfare which, in addition, was made responsible for the administration and supervision of all forms of public assistance, including general home relief, outdoor and indoor care, and old-age assistance. (General Acts of 1935, No. 332.)

⁹ Code of 1923, sec. 6748.

and four elected commissioners.¹⁰ The court of county commissioners was in the main an administrative and quasilegislative body; but it was constituted by law a court of record with inferior, special, and limited jurisdiction.

The governing body of the county was given general control of county finances, with the exception of funds for education. In addition to other general administrative duties, it was responsible for most of the county welfare activities. These included power to "make such rules and regulations for the support of the poor in the county as are not inconsistent with any law of the State,"¹¹ and general authority over the poorhouse, the county jail, and other county institutions. The governing body was also responsible for deciding on the need for and the establishment of a county tuberculosis hospital. A district plan for administration of poorhouses was authorized in Alabama, and two or more counties within a district could establish and operate a district home for the poor, a representative from each county constituting a board of supervisors of the district institution.¹²

The relation of the judge of the probate court to the governing body is one of the most significant features of county organization in Alabama.¹³ In about two-thirds of the counties the judge serves as chairman of the governing body and in some counties he may be judge of the county court as well as judge of the probate court.¹⁴ The probate court serves as the juvenile court except in the counties that have established separate juvenile courts or have transferred jurisdiction over juvenile cases by local laws to other courts.¹⁵ At the time of the study the judge of the juvenile court appointed the county board of child welfare, of which he was chairman, or, in counties in which the provisions for such a board had not been adopted, he had authority to appoint a special advisory board for the juvenile court of not less than 5 nor more than 10 citizens of the county who were interested in the welfare of children.¹⁶ The result of this overlapping of activities of the judges of the probate courts was close integration of services for children, but some question has been raised in regard to the desirability of coordinating such judicial and administrative services except in very small counties.¹⁷

¹⁰ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 5, pt. 4 (County Government), pp. 47, 53. Institute of Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

¹¹ Code of 1923, secs. 212, 2787, 2788, 6755.

¹² General Acts of 1927, No. 476, p. 521 (sec. 31 amended by General Acts of 1931, No. 604, p. 749); No. 383, p. 446.

¹³ Other States that had a somewhat similar county program are Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Oregon, and West Virginia.

¹⁴ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 5, pt. 4 (County Government), p. 53. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

¹⁵ Code of 1923, sec. 3529; General Acts of 1931, No. 530, p. 637, as amended by General Acts (extra session) of 1932, No. 275, p. 276; Local Acts of 1931, No. 457, p. 226.

¹⁶ Code of 1923, secs. 143 and 3550.

¹⁷ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 5, pt. 4 (County Government), p. 157. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

DEVELOPMENT OF STATE WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

Centralized State services for dependent, delinquent, and handicapped persons developed slowly in Alabama. The State institutions, established by the legislature as need for them arose, were administered by boards of directors or trustees. State funds for these institutions were provided on the basis of the number of inmates rather than as a general appropriation for each institution. This plan was first adopted in 1871¹⁸ for the hospital for the insane, which had been established in 1852 and opened in 1860. Gradually it was adopted for most of the other institutions. Under the general laws, county governing bodies established county poorhouses and jails, but until 1907 no State agency had authority to inspect these institutions and require improvement in the deplorable conditions that existed in many of them. State services began in 1907 with the creation of the office of inspector of jails and almshouses¹⁹ (this inspector was also authorized to investigate child-labor conditions in cotton mills) but the year 1919 marked the beginning of a real State welfare program. It has been suggested that the successful organization of social forces during the World War was the stimulus that awakened the citizens of Alabama to the realization of their need for concerted action to attain an adequate social program for the State.²⁰ In 1919 a State department for services for children was established, and business administration of State institutions was taken over by a central office.

STATE CHILD-WELFARE DEPARTMENT

The creation of this department was largely the result of the work of the State child-labor committee, which was organized about 1900 to improve child-labor conditions. In 1918 this committee planned a program of social legislation and State administration. Realizing the need for building up public sentiment in favor of such measures, the committee enlisted the cooperation of the State university and the National Child Labor Committee in a study of child welfare in the State. The study was planned for two purposes: To present to the public (1) a portrayal of conditions as they actually existed and (2) definite recommendations for legislation. A short time later, at the invitation of the Governor, Hastings H. Hart of the Russell Sage Foundation made a study of the social institutions and agencies of the State as they were related to the State's wartime activities.

Both studies brought out the great need for centralization in the administration of social welfare throughout the State and recommended the creation of a State board of social or public welfare, of which one division should be a department of child welfare. Dr.

¹⁸ General Acts of 1870-71, No. 183, p. 219.

¹⁹ General Acts of 1907, No. 278, p. 335.

²⁰ Alabama Childhood, the official bulletin of the State Child-Welfare Department of Alabama, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April-May-June 1921), p. 38.

Hart's report outlined the scope of the service of such an agency as including supervisory responsibility for all work for dependent, delinquent, and defective persons, with special administrative responsibility for the care of dependent and neglected children and for the provisions of the child-labor law. The only supervisory work being done in the State at this time was that of the State prison inspector, and it is interesting to note that the proposed State board of public welfare was thought of as an expansion of this office.²¹ The report of the National Child Labor Committee contained material on various aspects of child welfare, including health and education. Its recommendations as to State welfare services were confined to an outline of the duties of a division of child welfare of a proposed State board of social welfare.²²

The State administration at this time was interested in the need for central business administration of State institutions rather than in a general welfare program. A bill creating a State board of control and economy was introduced and enacted early in the 1919 session of the legislature. When it became evident that there was no possibility of extending the powers of this board to include a broader welfare program, the group particularly interested in children proposed and accomplished the creation of a second State agency—the State child-welfare department.²³

This department was given broad powers for the protection and care of children and for the development of services of all public and private agencies caring for them, including the juvenile courts. It was also given administration of the improved child-labor law enacted in the same year. The original act gave the department responsibility for visiting State institutions as well as for supervising all public and private institutions caring for dependent, neglected, or delinquent minor children.²⁴ In 1923 this last provision was amended so as to omit from the department's supervision the State insane hospitals, the State school for mental deficient, the State training school for girls, and the State industrial school for boys.²⁵ In 1931 the exception was removed so that apparently these institutions were again placed under the general supervision of the department, although all administrative powers remained with the boards of trustees set up for this purpose.²⁶

The child-welfare department developed and expanded the services for children. It furthered more adequate social legislation and worked for an administrative organization that would make such legislation an effective instrument for the welfare of children.

STATE BOARD OF CONTROL AND ECONOMY

Central fiscal control of State institutions was the major purpose in the creation of the State board of control and economy. The act

²¹ Hart, Hastings H.: *Social Problems of Alabama*, pp. 66 and 67. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1918.

²² *Child Welfare in Alabama*, p. 237. National Child Labor Committee, New York, 1918.

²³ *Alabama Childhood*, the official bulletin of the State Child-Welfare Department of Alabama, Vol. 1, No. 4 (June 1922), p. 31.

²⁴ Code of 1923, sec. 103.

²⁵ Code of 1923, sec. 104.

²⁶ General Acts of 1931, No. 316, p. 366.

provided that the board should consist of three members to be appointed by the Governor—a chairman and two associate members, one of whom was to be designated as secretary. Members were to hold office at the will of the Governor, but, if not terminated by the Governor, the term of the chairman was set at 4 years and that of the associate members at 2 years. The annual salary of the chairman was \$6,000 and of the associate members \$4,000.²⁷

The board was given authority over all appropriations for eleemosynary institutions of the State. It was also given a large share of the actual administration of the institutions, including the fixing of salaries and the adoption of rules and regulations for the guidance of officers and employees of the institutions. The boards of trustees of the various institutions were to retain authority to appoint the superintendents and other employees, but these appointees might be removed from office by the State board of control and economy. A member of the State board was required to visit at least once a month each of the institutions under its control.

All responsibility for the penal system of the State was vested in the State board of control and economy. The State board of inspectors of convicts, established in 1885 to supervise the care given to convicts under the lease system of the State, was abolished, and its functions and duties, including administration of penal institutions, was transferred to the new board.²⁸ The office of the State prison inspector was also placed under the new board.²⁹

Another important duty of the board was to serve as purchasing agent for all supplies for all departments and activities of the State, including all educational and eleemosynary institutions and all State and county offices.

This board was abolished after 4 years of service. Some of its duties were transferred to the newly created State board of administration, but administrative and fiscal control of eleemosynary institutions was returned to the boards of trustees of these institutions.

STATE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

The State board of administration created in 1923 was primarily concerned with administration of the penal affairs of the State. In the beginning it consisted of two members designated as president and associate member. In 1931 the board plan was abolished, although the name was retained, the work being placed under a director appointed by the Governor to hold office during his pleasure at a maximum salary of \$7,500. This salary was reduced to \$6,000 in 1932, and to \$5,000 in 1933.³⁰

In addition to complete control and administration of the State penal system the board carried on certain activities originally vested

²⁷ General Acts of 1919, No. 47, p. 43.

²⁸ The use of inspectors to supervise the care given to convicts began shortly after the establishment of a State prison in 1839 (General Acts of 1839, No. 39, p. 33). The first inspectors were elected by the legislature. In 1882 the duties of these inspectors were broadened to include supervision of convicts employed or hired outside the penitentiary (General Acts of 1882-83, No. 65, p. 134), and appointment by the Governor superseded election by the legislature. A revised statute enacted in 1885 placed the board of inspectors of convicts in complete charge of the penal system, the president of the board serving as warden of the State penitentiary (General Acts of 1884-85, No. 112, p. 187).

²⁹ General Acts of 1919, No. 552, p. 809; No. 758, p. 1117.

³⁰ General Acts of 1931, No. 9, p. 6, as amended by General Acts (extra session) of 1932, No. 37, p. 35 (sec. 7); No. 296, p. 301; General Acts (extra session) of 1933, No. 138, p. 125.

in the State board of control and economy. It was the central purchasing agency of the State, although the statute specifically excluded the State educational and eleemosynary institutions from the requirement of making purchases through this board. It was also responsible for administration of the State insurance fund.³¹

Since the administration of penal affairs was taken over by the State board of administration, important changes have occurred in the penal system of the State. The legislature of 1927 prohibited the leasing of convicts to private corporations and provided for the State's acceptance from the counties of county prisoners sentenced to hard labor, thus using the resources of the State for the employment of prisoners, a need that the counties could not meet.³²

STATE PRISON INSPECTOR

The State prison inspector, whose office was created in 1911, superseded the inspector of jails and almshouses, who had been carrying on similar functions since 1907. The prison inspector was responsible for the inspection at least twice each year of every county jail and almshouse and every municipal jail or prison in any incorporated town or city having 10,000 or more population and for the establishment of rules and regulations for their conduct that would assure sanitary and healthful conditions. Power to remove prisoners when conditions were undesirable and authority to require changes in jail construction were also given to the State prison inspector.³³ In connection with the enforcement of the child-labor law he was also made responsible for inspection of all establishments employing children, but in 1919 this duty was transferred to the State child-welfare department. Another duty authorized by the law was the inspection of the insane asylums of the State, but the biennial reports of the inspector gave no evidence that such inspection was made.

This official was required to be a legally qualified physician in good standing and learned in the science of sanitation, hygiene, and ventilation. The term of office was 6 years. After the first appointment by the Governor, this office was placed in 1911 under the general supervision of the State board of health. In 1919 the work of the prison inspector was affiliated with the newly created State board of control and economy, and his activities were extended to include inspection of the institutions under the management of this board.³⁴ With the creation of the State board of administration in 1923 the work of the inspector, which was continued under this board, was again changed to supervision of local institutions. At the time of this study the office of State prison inspector was practically independent.

The State prison inspector was largely responsible for improvements in the health conditions of jails. His work to obtain better food for prisoners culminated in the granting of State appropriations for feeding prisoners on a per capita basis. The transfer to the State penal system of county prisoners sentenced to hard labor was another instance of awakened interest in the problems of local offenders.

³¹ General Acts of 1923, No. 85, p. 67; No. 475, p. 629; No. 593, p. 767.

³² General Acts of 1927, No. 70, p. 51; No. 72, p. 52.

³³ General Acts of 1911, No. 303, p. 356; No. 530, p. 631.

³⁴ General Acts of 1919, No. 552, p. 809; No. 758, p. 1117.

Improvement in the almshouses also supervised by the inspector was not so evident,³⁵ but the plan approved by the legislature in 1927 for the development of district almshouses to replace inadequate and undesirable almshouses was advocated by this official.³⁶

STATE HOSPITAL SYSTEM

Some centralization of State care of the insane and the mentally deficient was attained in Alabama through placing all State institutions caring for such persons under a single self-perpetuating board designated as the board of trustees of the Alabama insane hospitals. The board was composed of seven persons in addition to the Governor, who was chairman *ex officio*. Members served for a term of 7 years, and vacancies were filled through election by the remaining members of the board, subject to the approval of the senate. Three additional members, two of whom must be women, were designated to serve with the board as trustees for the Partlow State School for Mental Deficients, which was created by statute in 1919.³⁷

The board appointed a superintendent of the hospital system whose term of office and salary were fixed by the board. With the approval of the board the superintendent appointed for each institution an assistant superintendent who was responsible for the conduct of the institution under his direction. This plan made possible uniform standards of service in the institutions and centralized medical service and business management.

The authority of the board of trustees of the Alabama insane hospitals was limited to hospital administration, and at the time of this study no program has been developed for State-wide mental-hygiene services.

PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF STATE WELFARE SERVICES

In the study of State government in Alabama made in 1931 by the Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, recommendations were made for complete reorganization of the welfare services of the State.³⁸ The plan proposed that a State department of public welfare be created—as 1 of 17 major departments—that would be responsible for the entire welfare program of the State. It was suggested that this department be administered by a commissioner of public welfare appointed by and responsible to an unpaid board of seven persons designated as the State board of public welfare.

The work of the department was to be organized in two bureaus, a bureau of social service and a bureau of institutional administration. The child-welfare department was to serve as the nucleus of the bureau of social service, its services to be extended to provide a comprehensive social-welfare program for the State. A division of

³⁵ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 2, pt. 1 (State Government), p. 167. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

³⁶ Report of the State Prison Inspector of Alabama for the period of 2 years ending September 30, 1926, p. 175. Birmingham.

³⁷ Code of 1923, secs. 1423-1430; 1465.

³⁸ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 2, pt. 1 (State Government), pp. 170-172. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932.

mental hygiene was to be set up in the bureau for the purpose of developing a State-wide mental-hygiene program in cooperation with the social workers to be added to the staff of the institutions for the insane and the mentally deficient.

The proposed bureau of institutional administration was to administer all State institutions except the home for Confederate veterans, a small institution with a steadily decreasing population. All boards of trustees of the institutions were to be abolished and complete control of the institutions placed in the bureau.³⁹

³⁹ These recommendations were not wholly realized in the department of public welfare act passed in 1935 (General Acts of 1935, No. 332), but a State department of public welfare with subordinate bureaus and divisions was created. The Governor and six members, of whom two were women, appointed by the Governor, constituted the board. The commissioner was appointed by the board on the basis of education, ability, and experience in the administration of public welfare and without regard to residence or political affiliation. The duties of the commissioner and the board were described. Within the department a bureau of family welfare and public assistance, a bureau of child welfare, a bureau of mental hygiene, and such other bureaus as the board found necessary were created.

THE STATE CHILD-WELFARE DEPARTMENT

DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

There was a steady growth in the work of the State child-welfare department throughout its existence. The act creating the department gave it broad powers for serving the children of the State and the agencies caring for children. The department was required (1) to supervise, license, and receive reports from all agencies and institutions caring for children, (2) to accept guardianship and to provide for children needing care away from their own homes, and (3) to administer the child-labor law. In addition, the department was charged with the duties of seeking out the children in need of care, of studying the social conditions affecting children throughout the State, and of furthering local public provisions for their care.⁴⁰

The active work of the department in the study of conditions affecting the welfare of children, in furthering legislative and administrative provisions for their care, and in establishing standards of service in public and private agencies was an important factor in the development of the services of the department and in obtaining the prominent position that it held in the welfare program of the State. The service of the department in the development of the county welfare program of the State was especially notable. The law creating county boards of child welfare, enacted in 1923,⁴¹ and a cooperative arrangement made in 1927 with the State department of education, whereby State funds were made available for the employment of county superintendents of child welfare,⁴² resulted in the employment of qualified social workers in nearly every county of the State.

Although county child-welfare boards were organized for service to children, members of the boards, the county superintendents, and the State department early realized that family welfare is an integral part of a child-welfare program. With the steadily increasing destitution due to unemployment, the relief of families in distress became an important part of the work of county social workers during 1931 and 1932. At the request of the association of probate judges and of the county commissioners, the State department made a study of the relief needs and resources of the State during the summer of 1932.⁴³ As a result of its active leadership and its close relation to the local social services, the child-welfare department was given an important part in the development of the relief program under the State relief administration created in 1933.

⁴⁰ General Acts of 1919, No. 457, as amended by laws of 1923, No. 275, p. 270.

⁴¹ General Acts of 1923, No. 369, p. 389.

⁴² Annual Report of the State Child-Welfare Department, 1927-28, pp. 11-24. Montgomery.

⁴³ Summary of Survey of Relief Needs and Resources of Alabama. State Child-Welfare Department, Montgomery, 1932. 9 pp. (Mimeographed.)

During 1933 the transfer of members of the staff of the State child-welfare department to the relief work and the designation of county superintendents of child welfare as the official relief agents seriously handicapped the child-welfare services of the State.⁴⁴ In order to give a clearer picture of the work of the State child-welfare department the description of its activities and organization is therefore given as of 1932.

STATE CHILD-WELFARE COMMISSION

The State child-welfare department was directed by the State child-welfare commission, which was a board of nine persons consisting of the Governor, the State superintendent of education, the State health officer, and six additional members appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of 6 years. Members of the commission served without salaries.

There had been little change in the appointed personnel of the commission, four of the six members having been on the board since its organization in 1919. Three members came from Birmingham, one from Montgomery, one from the State university, and one from a town in the northern part of the State. Since the three ex officio members lived in Montgomery, this meant a dominance of membership for the central section and little representation from the southern part of the State. Two members of the commission were women. An executive committee composed of the Governor and two other members served in the absence of the entire committee. Only one regular meeting of the commission each year was required by the law. During the fiscal year 1931-32 the commission as a whole met only once, but the executive committee held seven meetings.

A close relation between the director of the State child-welfare department and the State child-welfare commission was always maintained, and this to some degree extended to the staff of the department. All meetings of the State child-welfare commission were held in the Governor's office. After the business of the meeting had been transacted, the commission invariably visited the child-welfare department, had lunch with the staff, and then devoted the whole afternoon to discussion of the work of the department. Heads of divisions were called on to make their own reports. Other staff members took part in the general discussion. Frequently a dinner was given for the commission the night before the meeting in order that the department staff might become acquainted with the members of the commission. Field workers visiting communities in which members of the commission lived were instructed to call on them.

The commission was empowered to elect the director of the State child-welfare department and to provide for the selection or appointment of assistants and fix their salaries; to have general control of the performance of every duty and the administration of the powers given to the department; to control and direct the expenditure of all appropriations to the department; and to do such other things as were necessary to carry out the true intent and purpose of the law. The commission itself never gave any supervisory or inspection services.

⁴⁴ Beginning in 1934 services for children were reestablished, and special workers for children were once more provided in a number of counties.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT

The director of the child-welfare department held office at the pleasure of the commission. The original act specified an annual salary of \$3,000. This limitation was removed from the law in 1923, and the salary was set at \$4,000 by the legislature. No qualifications for the director were given in the law. Except for a period of about 2 years (1924-26) the first director had held office from the time the department was established up to the time of this study. She was an Alabama resident and had worked actively with the National Child Labor Committee for the passage of the law creating the department.

DIVISIONAL ORGANIZATION

From the time of its establishment the department was organized in divisions. The early reports of the department show a division of child labor, a division of institutions, and a division of extension. The division of children's aid, organized to carry out the child-caring program of the State, was not created until the State began giving direct-care service in 1922. No significant changes were made in the organization of the department until 1931, when the services of the division of extension and the division of children's aid were coordinated and reallocated into a division of county organization and a division of child care.

This change in organization was furthered by the recommendations made in a study conducted by the Child Welfare League of America in 1930.⁴⁵ The new program was the direct result of the State-wide employment of qualified county superintendents of child welfare, which made possible more adequate services to children within the counties and changed the character of the services that were needed from the State department.

ACTIVITIES OF THE DIVISIONS

DIVISION OF COUNTY ORGANIZATION

As originally organized this division, then known as the extension division, was concerned primarily with the promotion of county organization and the establishment of county boards of child welfare. Before 1930 its staff consisted of only two workers. With the establishment throughout the State⁴⁶ of county boards of child welfare and the employment of county social workers, it was realized that the emphasis in the work of the division needed to be changed from stimulation of local interest in children's problems to active supervision and assistance in the services being given in the counties. In order to carry out this program the division was reorganized and its functions were enlarged.

The professional staff of the division in 1932 consisted of a supervisor (who also served as assistant to the director of the State child-welfare department), four district supervisors, and a special worker

⁴⁵ Annual Report of the State Child-Welfare Department, 1930-31, pp. 27 and 28. (Unpublished.)

⁴⁶ In October 1932, of the 67 counties 63 were organized with county boards of child-welfare, 3 counties had retained the alternative plan of an advisory board associated with the juvenile court, and only 1 county had no organized program for children.

for adoption cases. As part of the reorganization program the State was divided into four districts, each supervisor being responsible for giving service and advice to the counties within her district. The State department recognized that responsibility for case-work services for the large majority of children should rest primarily on the county, but that the State must furnish stimulation, supervision, education, guidance, and general assistance to the counties in the development of county welfare programs. The counties' demands on the State department increased so much that the staff in the division was scarcely able to cope with the many problems arising throughout the State. In the study made by the Child Welfare League of America in 1930 it was recommended that six district supervisors be employed in this division.

In addition to its supervisory and advisory services to the counties the division was responsible for the certification of persons to be employed as county superintendents of child welfare or as probation officers. Another duty allocated to this division was the investigation of petitions for adoption, a responsibility given to the State department in a law enacted in 1931.⁴⁷

DIVISION OF CHILD CARE

This division was created in 1922 when the State department took over the child-caring services previously given by the Alabama Children's Aid Society. At that time it was called the children's aid division. Before county social services were developed the children's aid division was asked for many types of service in addition to those of providing foster homes and supervising the children accepted for care by the department. Members of the staff were called on to consult with the juvenile courts or other agencies on difficult cases and to undertake protective and case-work services for children and families whose need was brought to their attention when in the field. The work of the division was carried on under a district plan. From 1927 to 1931 the professional staff of the children's aid division consisted of a general supervisor and six or, for some years, seven case workers.

In the realignment of services accomplished in 1930 and 1931 the work of the newly created division of child care was limited to the reception and care of children committed to the guardianship of the State child-welfare department. This included finding foster homes and supervising the children placed in them. In addition to clerical assistants, the staff in 1932 consisted of a supervisor, four case workers, an agent responsible for the purchase of clothing for the children, and a physician who gave part-time service. The case workers worked from the central office rather than on a district plan.

The supervisor of the division of county organization had general supervision of the division of child care, and, therefore, the activities of the two divisions were closely integrated. This arrangement was essential to the plan of making each county responsible for all children in it who needed temporary care. County superintendents of child welfare made investigations before children were accepted as wards by the State department and supervised wards who were placed

⁴⁷ General Acts of 1931, No. 405, p. 504.

in their counties. The district supervisors in the division of county organization were, therefore, constantly consulted in regard to the children who became wards of the division of child care.

DIVISION OF INSTITUTIONS

The division of institutions had been maintained since the organization of the department. It consisted in 1932 of the supervisor and a secretary, who was shared with the division of child labor. The division of institutions was responsible for licensing and supervising all child-caring and child-placing organizations in the State. For several years the supervisory responsibility of the division was limited to private organizations that were concerned primarily with the care of dependent children, although according to the law both public and private institutions were to be supervised, except that no power or authority was given the department with respect to the State hospitals for the insane and the State institutions for delinquent children.⁴⁸ In 1931 the authority of the State department to inspect public institutions for children was reaffirmed in the statute, and the statement excepting the State institutions was omitted.⁴⁹ This gave the division increased responsibility for care given to delinquent children, because most of them were under the care of public institutions.

Beginning in 1931, the division licensed all boarding homes for children, established minimum standards for such homes, and prescribed rules for their regulation. The collection and analysis of statistics of population of child-caring organizations was another activity of this division.

DIVISION OF CHILD LABOR

The division of child labor, organized from the beginning of the department, consisted of a chief child-labor inspector and a deputy inspector. They spent a large part of their time in field work, making inspections of plants where children were or might be employed; visiting officers who issued employment certificates, health officers responsible for medical examinations of applicants for work permits, and other interested persons in a community; and making investigations in connection with accidents to employed children.

The child-labor law in Alabama was administered by the child-welfare department from the time the department was established.⁵⁰ Much of the time of the inspectors was spent in trying to interpret the social factors involved in the protection of children from child labor. Although the division supplemented its work by using county superintendents of child welfare as provided by the statute, it needed additional staff in order to administer the child-labor law effectively.

The division collected and analyzed statistics on employment certificates issued for children.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS

In the early years of its existence the State child-welfare department met general lack of understanding of the problems and needs of

⁴⁸ Code of 1923, sec. 104.

⁴⁹ General Acts of 1931, No. 316, p. 366.

⁵⁰ In 1935 a State department of labor was created and the responsibilities of the division of child labor were transferred to this department.

the children of the State with whose welfare it was concerned. In addition to the educational work needed for the development of juvenile courts and organizations caring for children, which became part of the regular services of the department, it was also necessary to explain child-welfare problems to the public and to organized groups.

One of the first persons appointed on the staff was an educational secretary, who carried on the general educational and publicity work for the department. The publication of a quarterly bulletin was authorized by the State child-welfare commission, and during 1921 and 1922 four numbers of this bulletin, known as "Alabama Childhood," were issued. Because of the steadily increasing pressure on the resources of the department for other services, this organized educational program was discontinued, and general educational work was carried on through talks given to groups by members of the staff and the issuance of news releases and bulletins prepared by the staff of the various divisions.

The law creating the department specified that a biennial report should be prepared and presented to the Governor. However, an annual report to the State child-welfare commission, of which the Governor was chairman, was prepared by the department. This report included a description of the work of the divisions and statistics relating to their services, a financial statement, discussions of child-welfare problems, and recommendations as to legislation and services needed for the protection of the children of the State. Printed reports were issued at irregular intervals, the last being for the year ended September 30, 1934.⁵¹ Some of the earlier reports were published in the bulletin *Alabama Childhood*, but reports for 1923 and 1928 and for the period 1924 to 1927 were issued as separate publications.

In order to obtain basic information as to the legislative and administrative needs of the State in its program for children, the department has sponsored several State-wide studies of welfare conditions. In 1921 a study of child-welfare legislation was made under the auspices of the National Child Labor Committee.⁵² The report presented to the child-welfare commission in May 1922 included recommendations as to needed child-welfare legislation. In 1930 the Child Welfare League of America was requested to make a study of the work of the department.⁵³ As a result of this study a comprehensive reorganization of the services of two of the divisions of the department was made. A study of relief needs of the State was made in 1932 by the staff of the department in cooperation with county boards of child welfare and with consultation from the American Public Welfare Association.⁵⁴

The department maintained active and close cooperation with all organized groups in the State concerned with children's problems, including the Federation of Women's Clubs, the American Legion,

⁵¹ A printed report was issued for the year ended September 30, 1934. This was the last report before the department became a division of the department of public welfare.

⁵² *Alabama Childhood*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (June 1922), pp. 4-100.

⁵³ *Survey of Child-Welfare Work in Alabama, 1931*. Unpublished report of the Child-Welfare League of America.

⁵⁴ *Summary of Survey of Relief Needs and Resources of Alabama*. State Child-Welfare Department, Montgomery, 1932. 9 pp. (Mimeographed.)

the League of Women Voters, and all private associations providing welfare services for children. The department also played an important part in the State conference of social work.

In 1931 and 1933 district conferences were arranged from time to time by the supervisor of the division of county organization. These conferences were regarded as one of the most important and valuable phases of the educational work done by the department. Board members, social workers, officials, and citizens took part in the program. An opportunity was provided for the discussion of common problems and for other discussions that might give the workers a broader vision, so that all would recognize that child-welfare service was a State-wide as well as a community program. During the fiscal year 1931-32 five such conferences were held. Each conference had its own organization, with officers elected from the counties in the district.

In connection with its duty of certifying qualified persons to be employed as county superintendents of child welfare, the department provided opportunities for such persons to obtain the special training required. Summer training courses, made necessary by the requirement that county social workers holding provisional certificates attend some school of social work for two summers out of three, were established first at the Alabama College for Women and later at the University of Alabama, where graduate credit was allowed. In 1932, 38 students were in attendance, 12 for a session of 12 weeks and 26 county social workers holding provisional certificates for a session of 6 weeks. Six additional county social workers attended other schools of social work. The need for training had been so firmly impressed on the county officials that salaries were continued for 6 weeks while the workers were attending training courses.

The department also sponsored institutes for county social workers at which the work of the State departments of child welfare, health, and education and of other groups working in the counties was discussed in relation to the services of the county child-welfare boards.

PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT

Alabama had no provision for civil service. The staff of the child-welfare department was selected by its director, appointments being approved by the State child-welfare commission. The members of the staff were on the whole well qualified for their work. The department was not limited to residents of the State in making appointments and so recruited its staff through schools of social work and social agencies. Of the 12 social workers on the staff in 1931, 8 were college graduates and 3 others had attended college or normal school. Three of them had completed a graduate course in a school of social work, 1 had done graduate work in labor and industry, and 5 others had had some work at a school of social work.

With the change in organization of the services of the department in 1930 and 1931, a number of changes in personnel were made. However, three of the social workers on the staff in 1932 had been with the department for a long period, one for 10 years and two for 5 years.

The child-welfare commission was given authority to fix the compensation of all employees except the director. It never adopted

definite rules and regulations regarding entrance salaries, advancement, or promotion, but based each salary and promotion on the qualifications and accomplishments of the employee. In 1932 the assistant to the director, who was also supervisor of the division of county organization, received \$3,000 a year, and all other supervisors of divisions received approximately \$2,400. The salaries ranged from \$1,860 to \$2,400 for the four district supervisors and from \$1,680 to \$1,800 for inspectors and case workers. As a result of the drastic measures for reduction in the expenditures of the State in 1933, the salaries of all State officers and employees were fixed by statute.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Under the laws of 1935 the board of the State department of public welfare is authorized to fix minimum standards of services and personnel and to set salary schedules based upon the education, training, previous experience, and general efficiency which must have been attained by persons selected for positions in the State department.

STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

In the development of State services for children there was very close cooperation between the State departments of child welfare, health, and education. This relation was furthered by the participation of the superintendent of education and of the State health officer in the State child-welfare commission, which kept these departments in close touch with the child-welfare problems of the State. The State prison inspector also cooperated by referring to the attention of the child-welfare department the children found in almshouses. In 1931 the child-welfare department was given authority to visit and inspect specified State institutions receiving children, and after that time the institutions caring for delinquent children were more closely coordinated with other State and county services for these children.

State services for Negro children did not develop as rapidly as those for white children, although more than a third of the State's population was Negro, and 32 counties each had more than 10,000 Negroes. State institutional provision for delinquent Negro children was limited, and there was no institution for those that were mentally defective. There were three small private institutions for dependent Negro children under supervision of the child-welfare department. The department was conscious of its duty toward the Negro population of the State and accepted a few Negro children for care. The department hoped to expand its activities so that the Negro could have his rightful share in the State's welfare program. County superintendents of child welfare were encouraged to make provisions for the care of dependent and delinquent Negro children and in a number of counties had done much work for them. In the study made by the Child Welfare League of America it was recommended that every county with a large Negro population should have a Negro social worker on the staff.⁵⁶

DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL PUBLIC-WELFARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

COUNTY BOARDS OF CHILD WELFARE ^{56a}

The law of 1919 creating the child-welfare department stated that one of the department's duties was to confer with the judges and probation officers of the juvenile courts and to perfect the work of such courts. The juvenile-court law enacted in 1915 had made possible the appointment of advisory boards to assist the court in its work for children and had authorized the judge to appoint probation officers.⁵⁷ Little use had been made of these pro-

⁵⁶ Under the Social Security Act, Federal funds are made available to assist the States in the development of child-welfare services, and Alabama is participating in this program. Beginning May 1, 1936, two Negro social workers were employed under the plan for child-welfare service in the State. One of these was a consultant available to the whole State. The second was assigned to a single county.

^{56a} In 1935 the powers and duties of the county boards of child welfare were transferred to county departments of public welfare (General Acts of 1935, No. 332, secs. 10-16).

⁵⁷ General Acts of 1915, No. 506, p. 577.

visions until, through the work of the division of extension and the division of children's aid of the State child-welfare department, the need for local services was recognized. By 1924 some organized work for children had been started in six counties under an advisory board of the juvenile court. The need for a broader child-welfare program for the counties, including provisions for compulsory school attendance that had been authorized by the school code in 1915,⁵⁸ was soon realized, and the department furthered the enactment in 1923 of a law providing for county child-welfare boards.

This law authorized the employment of county superintendents of child welfare and made possible the coordination of all county welfare services. It was the duty of the county superintendent to administer general social services for the children of the county, to act as attendance officer, to serve as county probation officer when appointed by the judge of the juvenile court, to cooperate with the State child-labor inspector, to act as parole officer for children from the State training schools who were placed in the county, and to assist the State department in its services for children in the county.

The law establishing county boards of child welfare was permissive, and by the end of 1926 only 14 counties had an organized program for children under a county board of child welfare or an advisory board of the juvenile court. Although given no specific authority by the law, the State department through its field staff did much to stimulate the interest of officials and citizens and to assist in working out the practical problems of organization.

The action of the State department of education greatly stimulated this organization in 1927. The legislature of 1927 appropriated \$850,000 to the State department of education to be known as the attendance fund and to be distributed among the counties on the basis of the aggregate daily attendance in schools during the preceding year. At a meeting of the State board of education it was observed that counties having county boards of child welfare had better school attendance than other counties, and therefore the county board of child welfare was approved as the agency through which compulsory school-attendance provisions were to be administered. It was made mandatory that both county and city boards of education cooperate in the employment of a county superintendent of child welfare when such joint service could be established with the county board of education paying not more than 60 percent of the cost and the court of county commissioners or board of revenue at least 40 percent. It was further provided that counties failing to provide the joint attendance and welfare service would not be eligible to receive \$2,000 of the attendance fund allocated to that county.

As a result of this action 40 additional counties had organized programs for child welfare by January 1929, and by October 1931 63 of the 67 counties in the State had authorized the appointment of county child-welfare boards and 3 additional counties (Jefferson, Mobile, and Montgomery) had advisory boards serving the juvenile court. The financial depression made it necessary for 12 counties

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 470, p. 534.

to discontinue the employment of their county superintendents of child welfare during 1932, but in spite of this there were 48 counties on January 1, 1933, that had retained their social workers. Four of these employed a county superintendent and one assistant, and another a superintendent and two assistants. In addition, three large counties provided services through probation officers of the juvenile court.

Qualifications of county social workers.

Appointments of county superintendents of child welfare, although left to the county board of child welfare, were safeguarded by a requirement that the State board of education and the State child-welfare commission certify the social worker as eligible for appointment. The qualifications set by the two departments were:

(1) Graduation from a standard college.

(2) One year of training in social work, school attendance, and related courses.

(3) Three years' successful teaching experience or 3 years' successful experience in social work under supervision. (Assistant county superintendents of child welfare did not have to meet this requirement.)

College graduates having the required experience but not having the required training in social service (item 2) could receive provisional certificates upon completion of a 12 weeks' course in social work in which particular emphasis was given to rural case work, family welfare, community organization, and social legislation. In order to keep a provisional certificate active, however, the social worker was required to attend some school of social work for at least 6 weeks a year in 2 years out of 3. Permanent certificates were to be issued only on completion of a year's training at a school of social service. During the year ended September 1932 the provisional certificates of 35 workers were renewed, and 37 new workers were certified as eligible for positions.

Salaries.

Although the salaries for county superintendents of child welfare and their assistants were not high—\$1,500 to \$2,100 a year—they probably equaled the average for such positions throughout the country. A superintendent usually received \$1,800 a year plus \$600 for maintenance of a car.

Supervision of county services.

District supervisors of the division of county organization in the State department of child welfare supervised the work of county superintendents. As each supervisor had 13 to 19 counties in her district there were limitations on the time that could be spent in each county during the year. The number of visits and their length depended on the experience and ability of the superintendent and the number and types of problems that arose in the county. Since the purpose of supervision was to improve the standards of service given, to assist in interpreting child-welfare problems to various groups, and to help on case problems, much time was needed in a county in which the superintendent was new to the county or was inexperienced in dealing with the many types of problems that each county superintendent met.

In these visits to the counties the supervisors worked primarily with the county superintendents and their assistants, helping them to study and understand their problems and to see their work in relation to the work still to be done in the county, as well as assisting them on case problems. Supervisors also attended meetings of the county boards of child welfare in order to become acquainted with their policies and procedures and to interpret to them the developments in the State.

The State child-welfare department required monthly reports of the work of county superintendents on forms that were adopted in 1932. These were worked out in consultation with the county superintendents and before they were finally adopted were used for a trial period. They included information on each application and case disposed of during the month, the type of service given to each person accepted, and the expenditures made for his care. With the transfer of county superintendents from child-welfare work to relief administration these detailed reports to the State child-welfare department were practically discontinued by the end of 1933.

As school-attendance work constituted one of the major activities of county superintendents, the State department of education also had some supervision over the county superintendents, and special reports on school-attendance problems were submitted monthly to this department.

LOCAL PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

Provisions for local public support for dependent persons who were not inmates of almshouses had not been made in Alabama up to the time of this study. The legislature of 1927 enacted a statute prohibiting the use of county funds for care of a pauper outside an almshouse except in an emergency.⁵⁹ As this law also prohibited the care of children in almshouses, the counties were confronted with a difficult problem in providing for their dependent children. Fortunately the law forbidding outdoor relief was liberally interpreted by the State attorney general in a ruling of December 3, 1930, in which he said that county funds could be used for aid to children inasmuch as it was illegal to admit children from 1 to 18 years of age to the almshouses.

A statute enacted in 1931⁶⁰ gave the county court of commissioners or the county board of revenue in any county power to appropriate money to the county board of child welfare for the relief of children under 18 years of age. This confirmed the legality of outdoor relief so far as aid to children was concerned. There was also a provision in a juvenile-court act of the same year that children committed by the court to the home of their parents or guardian or boarded in a suitable family home should be a valid charge on the county.⁶¹ Under these two provisions it was possible to give family relief according to the needs of the children.

The responsibility for calling attention to the necessity of public support of children and for furthering the enactment of the law rested largely with the child-welfare department. In a few counties

⁵⁹ General Acts of 1927, No. 476, p. 529 (sec. 31 amended by General Acts of 1931, p. 749).

⁶⁰ General Acts of 1931, No. 339, p. 397.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, No. 315, sec. 8, p. 363.

funds were appropriated by the county authorities for care of children in boarding homes, and occasionally provision was made for a family of dependent children in their own homes, but there was great need for extension of this program throughout the State and for more adequate appropriations. Alabama had no mothers' aid law, although this had been advocated by the State department for many years. County workers worked diligently to obtain funds from private sources to provide the care urgently needed for children in the counties.⁶²

In the survey of relief needs and resources of Alabama made by the department in 1932 it was found that \$12,472 had been spent during the year by the counties throughout the State for boarding-home care of children, and that an additional \$4,629 had been spent during 8 months of this period for the aid of children in their own homes.⁶³ These amounts were small as compared with local public expenditures for children in other States, but they represented a beginning in the use of local public funds for the care of children.

CARE OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

CHILDREN UNDER CARE OF THE STATE CHILD-WELFARE DEPARTMENT

The law creating the child-welfare department authorized it "to receive minor children committed to its care and to place such children either in family homes or in institutions caring for children and to supervise such children when placed."⁶⁴ The need for State guardianship was not immediately evident, as the Alabama Children's Aid Society, a private agency organized in 1917, was serving children throughout the State. For about 3 years the State department cooperated closely with this society; the field agent of the State department assisted in raising funds for the care of children, gathered information throughout the State as to needs of children, and developed resources for their care. The work of the society was eventually combined with that of the department, and in November 1922 the society was dissolved, the State took over its 200 wards, and a children's aid division was organized to care for these children and to aid other children throughout the State.⁶⁵ The department was then the only agency in Alabama doing child placing on a State-wide basis.

Extent of the child-care service.

During its first 5 or 6 years the children's aid division found it necessary to give much general service for dependent or neglected children throughout the State in addition to caring for State wards. The report of the State child-welfare department for the 4 years 1924-27 showed that during this time applications were received for assistance of 3,334 children. It was possible to find agencies or persons able to care for about two-thirds of these children, but the State department assumed responsibility for 1,121 dependent or neg-

⁶² A statute passed in 1935 (General Acts of 1935, No. 496, p. 1061) provided for aid to dependent children in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act, and Alabama is participating in this program.

⁶³ Summary of Survey of Relief Needs and Resources of Alabama. State Child-Welfare Department, Montgomery, 1932. 9 pp. (Mimeographed.)

⁶⁴ General Laws of 1919, No. 457, p. 695.

⁶⁵ Annual Report of the State Child-Welfare Department, 1922-23, p. 15. Montgomery.

lected children, of whom 524 were committed to the department for foster-home care and 597 were accepted informally for supervision in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

With the development of organized county work for children and the appointment of social workers in the counties, the need for the State child-welfare department to serve children needing temporary care steadily decreased. During 1930 it was decided that the department would care only for children needing permanent care who were committed to its guardianship by the courts. At this time the name of the children's aid division was changed to the division of child care.

Practically all applications for the acceptance of children as State wards came from the county superintendents of child welfare or from the courts and social agencies of urban centers. A social case record was filed with the supervisor of the division of child care by the appropriate district supervisor in the division of county organization and then these two officials conferred regarding acceptance. The cases that could be taken care of by the district supervisors never reached the attention of the division of child care, and there were only 221 applications to the division during the fiscal year 1930-31.⁶⁶ The number of children under care of the State child-welfare department steadily decreased, as is shown by the following figures:

| <i>Fiscal year</i> | <i>Children under care at the close of the year</i> |
|--------------------|---|
| 1927-28----- | 633 |
| 1930-31----- | 544 |
| 1931-32----- | 569 |
| 1933-34----- | 451 |

For children who were accepted, the department arranged for care in free foster homes, in boarding homes, in boarding schools, in wage homes, or with relatives. Boarding homes were generally used by the department for temporary care and, in some instances, for long-time care. On September 30, 1934, there were 200 children in free foster homes, 154 in boarding homes, 5 in wage homes, 16 in institutions and boarding schools, and 76 in their own homes or those of relatives. Most of the children in free foster homes were infants or preschool children who had previously been placed in boarding homes for a few weeks pending their permanent placement in free foster homes. The report of the department showed that the average amount paid per child for board and tuition was \$13.19 a month, and the total average cost per child, including medical care, clothing, school supplies, and other incidentals, was \$16.70 a month. The entire cost was paid by the State, which spent \$32,275.04 for the care of dependent children during the fiscal year ended September 30, 1934, exclusive of salaries of the staff.

Standards of care.

Children accepted for care were usually brought to Montgomery for study and care before they were permanently placed. A large proportion of the boarding homes used by the department were in Montgomery County. Medical care for wards of the State child-

⁶⁶ Annual Rpoort of the State Child-Welfare Department, 1930-31, p. 49. (Unpublished.)

welfare department was provided through the part-time services of a staff physician, who made initial and follow-up examinations and gave necessary treatments. A pediatrician cared for infants, and different specialists gave treatment to children with remediable defects. Dental treatment was provided when necessary. The department was handicapped in making plans for some of its children by lack of mental-hygiene services.

The case work of the division of child care for the most part compared favorably with that of private children's agencies. For a few years a special agent for home finding was employed, but this plan was discontinued, and home finding was made part of the work of staff members of the division. Some assistance in finding homes in their counties was given by county superintendents of child welfare. Prospective homes were always visited, and both the applying foster parents were seen. Persons given as reference were also interviewed. The department emphasized the importance of good home finding. Whenever feasible, brothers and sisters were kept together. Usually not more than two children were placed in the same boarding home, and ordinarily these were children of the same sex. Supervision of children in foster homes was carried on by the social workers of the division of child care, but, when children were placed in counties at some distance from Montgomery, supervision was often delegated to county superintendents of child welfare, although the division was directly responsible for the children.

The division of child care realized that the foster parents caring for the wards of the State child-welfare department served as a supplement to the official staff of the division. Therefore an effort was made to educate this group so that their service would conform with the ideals of the department. Meetings of both the foster mothers and foster fathers were held occasionally. The division also sent out at frequent intervals, usually monthly, mimeographed material on such subjects as standards of care, health, and needs and activities of children during different seasons of the year.

The division kept detailed case records of the children and registers of foster homes from which analyses could be made of the number of applications for the care of dependent and neglected children, admissions and discharges, complaints, applications from foster homes, and of children who were committed by the county juvenile courts as wards of the State child-welfare department, the age groups represented, and parental status of children.

STATE SUPERVISORY SERVICES

Supervision of institutions and agencies.

The State child-welfare department had no power over the incorporation of organizations caring for children; in fact, it was not necessary for institutions to incorporate before operating. Annual licenses were required, however, for all societies, agencies, and institutions receiving or caring for dependent, neglected, or delinquent minor children. Before granting a license the department required that it be reasonably and satisfactorily assured that: (1) There was a present need for the proposed agency or institution; (2) the character and intentions of the applicants were satisfactory;

(3) the organization would be adequately financed; (4) capable, trained, or experienced workers would be employed; (5) the methods to be used and disposition to be made of the children served would be altruistic, judicious, and in accord with the welfare of society; (6) there was a probability of permanence in the proposed child-welfare agency or institution.⁶⁷

During 1932, licenses were granted to 22 institutions or receiving homes caring for children and 2 child-placing agencies. The one agent in the division of institutions tried to visit these organizations quarterly in order to help them to work out a modern program of child care. Any institution receiving children for care was required to accord this agent the privilege of inspection and access to its accounts and its records of children, in order that she might learn the kind and quality of work done and have a basis for recommendations to the State child-welfare department. The department was expected to inform board and staff members of the agencies and institutions of approved methods of child care, best types of housing, institutional equipment, and methods of keeping adequate records. According to the Alabama law the principal purpose of visitation was not to present official demands for adherence to the provisions of the law, but rather to offer friendly counsel on child-welfare problems and information about progressive methods and ways to improve the service rendered.⁶⁸ In several States this is the policy of the State welfare department, but Alabama is one of the few States in which the policy is written in the law.

It was not customary in Alabama for the State to give subsidies to private institutions. However, beginning in 1919 the State gave aid to the vocational school for girls in Birmingham, a small, well-managed private school for dependent or neglected girls, which was conducted by a board of trustees. An annual State appropriation⁶⁹ was made toward the support of this school, which provided for a class of girls that were not proper subjects for the State training school and yet needed special training.

In the visits to institutions and agencies the supervisor of the division of institutions inspected the equipment and facilities for caring for children, studied case records, discussed intake problems, and conferred with the superintendent and the board of the institution on practical problems affecting the program and policies of the organization. The reports of the division showed concrete results of the service given, through the improvement of standards of care in most of the institutions of the State.

A cordial relation had been built up between the State department of child welfare and the institutions. Institutions welcomed the type of supervision that the State department provided and invited further assistance and cooperation. At their request several different institutions were made the subject of a special study by the supervisor of the division of institutions. Discussion of common problems and of the place of the institution in the State program was made possible through the organization of the Alabama Conference of Child-Caring Institutions, which held its first meeting in July 1932.

⁶⁷ General Acts of 1923, No. 272, pp. 270, 275.

⁶⁸ Code of 1923, sec. 111.

⁶⁹ The appropriation of \$6,320 annually from 1920 to 1931 was reduced to \$5,000 in 1932 but was restored in 1935.

The greatest weakness in the institutional program of the State was the lack of social services. Many of the institutions were small and unable to employ a person to do case work. From time to time the child-welfare department gave some case-work service. It was suggested that a special social case worker be added to the division of institutions whose services would be available to institutions at cost.⁷⁰ This was not done, doubtless because of the financial depression in the State since the recommendation was made. Institutions were gradually realizing the value of such services and calling on county superintendents of child welfare or on social agencies to investigate applications for admission and to supervise children who had been returned to or left in their own homes or placed in foster homes. Because of the lack of a mother's aid law, the State child-welfare department encouraged the institutions to assist children in their own homes. The two child-placing agencies operating on a county basis in Jefferson and Mobile Counties gave intake as well as placement service to a number of institutions in their counties.

The division of institutions placed much emphasis on the improvement of case records and financial records of the institutions. The State child-welfare department provided blank forms on which institutions submitted two types of reports: (1) A monthly report of the number of children under care on the first and the last day of the month, and the number admitted and discharged during the month; (2) an individual report for each child under care, sent at the time of admission, which gave detailed social information about the child and his parents. At the time the child was discharged from care a supplementary report was sent and the data were entered on the child's record. The division summarized the information obtained and presented statistics on children under the care of institutions and agencies in its annual report.

There was no specific provision in Alabama for the supervision of day nurseries, but one day nursery was licensed in 1931. Informal day nurseries were in operation all over the State wherever women were employed in mills and other industries, and in the cities day nurseries were operating under private boards.

Supervision of maternity homes.

Alabama had only three maternity homes which cared primarily for unmarried mothers and their children, two in Mobile and one in Birmingham. These were licensed as agencies and institutions caring for children, and their supervision was therefore delegated to the supervisor of the division of institutions. Individual reports of unmarried mothers received and children born were sent to the State department. The maternity homes also sent a monthly report of the movement of population similar to that furnished by institutions for child care. In connection with the general supervision of these hospitals, a social worker from the State department gave special case-work services to the unmarried mothers in the Salvation Army Home in Birmingham for 6 months in 1932.

A special study was made of the Florence Crittenton Home, at the request of the president of its board of managers, in order that she

⁷⁰ Survey of Child-Welfare Work in Alabama, 1931. Unpublished report of the Child Welfare League of America.

might be better prepared to inform the public regarding its work, especially as to the type of girl received, her home conditions, her mentality, and the methods used in adjusting her case.

Supervision of boarding homes.

Not until 1931 was provision made for supervising boarding homes for children. A law enacted at that time defined a boarding home as any home in which a child under 16 years of age, unrelated to the family, was kept and provided with food, shelter, and care in return for compensation.⁷¹ It required such homes to have an annual license issued by the child-welfare department, which was authorized to establish minimum standards for boarding homes and to prescribe rules for their regulation. The duty of issuing licenses to boarding homes was placed in the division of institutions.

At the time the State department assumed responsibility over boarding homes it had already formulated definite standards and policies because of the wide use of boarding homes for placement of children under care of the division of child care, which in 1932 had nearly 100 boarding homes under supervision. Rules and standards for boarding homes had been prepared for the foster mothers in such homes, and the extension of these rules to all boarding homes was relatively simple, as they had already been tried and found to be practicable.

Applications for licenses for boarding homes used by social agencies were made by the agencies, and licenses were granted on the recommendation of the agency, without an investigation by the State department. A large majority of such boarding homes were used by the division of child care of the State department; and a small number of boarding homes were used by juvenile courts, county child-welfare boards, the children's aid society of Jefferson County, and a few other private agencies. Independent boarding homes applied directly to the State department, which through its own staff or an authorized agent investigated their qualifications for a license and passed judgment upon them.

Forms for application and for reporting the results of the investigation of the home were provided by the department, and, when the application was approved, a license which specified the number, ages, and sex of the children who might be cared for was mailed to the home. A mimeographed manual on boarding children in private homes, giving minimum standards for boarding homes, which had been prepared by the department, was sent to all agencies and to persons reported as conducting independent homes.

SERVICES FOR SPECIAL GROUPS OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Adoptions.

A new adoption law enacted in 1931 made the child-welfare department responsible for safeguarding children for whom adoption was requested.⁷² This law provided that the probate court must send a copy of each petition to the department, whose duty it was to verify the allegations of the petition, make a thorough investigation, and report its findings to the court. The department was

⁷¹ General Acts of 1931, No. 317, p. 368.

⁷² General Acts of 1931, No. 405, p. 504.

authorized to use designated agents, and so the county superintendents of child welfare, as well as the staff of the State department, were utilized for making investigations. If satisfied with the findings, the court had authority to issue an interlocutory order. Final order of adoption could not be granted until the child had lived for 1 year in the home of the petitioner, during which time he must be visited quarterly by an agent of the State child-welfare department. One member of the staff was directly responsible for handling the clerical work connected with adoption petitions. Forms were printed for the petition, the consent of parents, the report of the State child-welfare department to the probate court, the interlocutory order of the court, the reports of the quarterly visits of the department's agents, the final recommendations of the department, the final decree, and the notice of the final decree.

After the petition received by the State department was cleared in the files, acknowledged, and recorded in the office, a request for investigation was sent to the county superintendent of child welfare, who then made a report to the State department, with a recommendation as to the desirability of adoption. The department sent its recommendations to the probate court, and when a report of the court's action was received this was filed with the case. Reports of supervisory visits following the granting of the interlocutory decree were also filed. A final recommendation was made by the department at the end of the interlocutory period, and with the notice of the final court decree the case in the State child-welfare department was closed.

During the fiscal year ended September 30, 1934, 220 petitions for adoption were received, of which 134 were approved, 11 were disapproved, 21 were withdrawn, and 54 were pending on October 1, 1934.

Children born out of wedlock.

The law did not give the State department any specific duties for the care or protection of children born out of wedlock. No substantial changes had been made in the illegitimacy law for years, and the smallness of the amount that this law required the father to pay for the support of his child tended to discourage efforts to establish paternity as a means of obtaining support.⁷³ During 1932, 5,598 illegitimate births were reported in Alabama, of which about 700 were white, but only a very small proportion of these children came to the attention of social agencies. Of the children admitted to private institutions during the fiscal year 1931, 21 children, or 7 percent, were born out of wedlock. At the end of the same fiscal year 128 children, or 23 percent of the total number under care by the division of child care of the State department, were born out of wedlock.

Through its work with maternity homes and in its investigations of adoption petitions by county superintendents of child welfare the department encouraged more adequate provisions for the care of children born out of wedlock. However, the county superintendent rather than the State department was held responsible for most of

⁷³ In 1935 the maximum amount of support that could be required of a man adjudged to be the father of a child born out of wedlock was raised from \$50 to \$100 per year for a 10-year period. (General Acts of 1935, No. 186, p. 237.)

the case work for all special classes, including physically handicapped and feeble-minded children and unmarried mothers.

CARE OF MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND PROBLEM CHILDREN

At the time this study was made Alabama had made no provision for mental-hygiene service as a function of the State, and private facilities for such service were limited. There was no child-guidance clinic in the State, and no psychiatric service was available to the State child-welfare department for the study of problem children who were its wards nor to most of the institutions or agencies caring for children. The plan of governmental reorganization proposed by the Brookings Institution included a division of mental hygiene in the State welfare department, which would be equipped to provide such service.⁷⁴ State institutional care for mentally ill or mentally deficient persons was inadequate, as the hospitals for the insane and the school for the mentally deficient were crowded to capacity and additional patients were refused for lack of room. No out-patient service was maintained by any of these institutions.

The Partlow State School for Mental Deficients was established in 1919. This institution cared for approximately 500 white persons. There was no similar institution for Negroes. As compared with other States, Alabama's institutional provision was limited. The number of mental defectives and epileptics in the State institution per 100,000 of the general population on December 31, 1932, was 19.8 in Alabama as compared with an average of 65.2 for the whole United States, 147.7 in Massachusetts, 105.2 in Ohio, and 107.6 in Minnesota.⁷⁵ A large proportion of those admitted to the institution in its early years were in need of custodial care, but in later years there was an increase in the proportion of those of a higher grade.⁷⁶ A report made in 1931 showed that of a total of 535 inmates of all ages, 92 were attending kindergarten or elementary school classes.⁷⁷ Alabama had a sterilization law, and a few persons had been sterilized before being paroled to their homes.

In 1927 an act was passed making it mandatory to establish special classes in towns of over 6,000 population in which more than 10 children were 3 years or more retarded in mental development.⁷⁸ Since no State funds were provided to assist in establishing such classes, no attempt was made to carry out the provisions of the law, except in Birmingham, where special classes were established.⁷⁹

The State child-welfare department found a number of definitely subnormal children in the institutions caring for dependent children and assisted in obtaining psychological examination and admission of such children to the State school.

⁷⁴ Report on a Survey of the Organization and Administration of the State and County Governments of Alabama, vol. 2, pt. 1 (State Government), p. 172. Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, Washington, 1932. General Acts of 1935, No. 332, sec. 7, p. 764, provided for a bureau of mental hygiene, but no funds were available to establish this bureau.

⁷⁵ Mental Defectives and Epileptics in State Institutions, 1929-32, p. 10. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, 1934.

⁷⁶ Feeble-minded and Epileptics in State Institutions, 1928, p. 26; 1929-32, p. 11. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, 1932, 1934.

⁷⁷ Public and Private Residential Schools for Mentally Deficient and Epileptics, 1930-31, p. 8. U. S. Office of Education. Washington, 1933. (Mimeographed.)

⁷⁸ General Acts of 1927, No. 498, p. 598.

⁷⁹ The Education of Exceptional Children, pp. 43-52. Being chapter VI of the Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1930-1932. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin No. 2, 1933. Washington, 1933.

CARE OF DELINQUENT CHILDREN

INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Boys' industrial school.

This school was established in 1899 to care for delinquent white boys committed to it by juvenile courts or accepted from parents or guardians. It is situated attractively on the outskirts of the city of Birmingham. The school is controlled by a board of directors consisting of the Governor, the commissioner of agriculture and industries, the State superintendent of education, the attorney general, and seven additional members, all of whom must be women, elected for terms of 6 years.⁸⁰ The entire board meets only once a year, although members of the board visit the school frequently. The management of the institution is controlled for the most part by the superintendent.

The law provided that boys between the ages of 6 and 18 years might be accepted and kept under care until they were 21 years old. The average length of stay was a little more than 2 years. The population of the school on September 30, 1932, was 414, although the dormitory space was adequate for only about 300 boys. The school had a staff of 10 full-time teachers and one part-time teacher, and all boys attended school for a half day. Limitation of funds hampered the development of the program, but the vocational and recreational training given was constructive and stimulating, and the spirit of the school was excellent. Per capita appropriations for maintenance were fixed at \$270 per year in 1931, but in 1932 this was reduced to a maximum per capita of \$243, with the total appropriation not to exceed \$101,822.⁸¹ An annual appropriation of \$100,000 was made in 1935.^{81a}

Reform school for juvenile Negro lawbreakers.

The reform school for juvenile Negro lawbreakers, founded in 1907 as a reformatory for Negro boys by the State federation of colored women's clubs, was taken over by the State in 1911. Only boys were accepted until the legislature in 1931 provided that Negro girls under 18 might be admitted for care provided the capacity of the school was not exceeded.⁸² For a girls' dormitory a small building with grounds adjacent to the boys' school was donated by the group that established the school. The institution is controlled by a board of trustees consisting of the Governor, the State superintendent of education, and seven other trustees appointed by the Governor. Five of these trustees may be Negro women who are interested in the education and training of delinquent colored children.

Negro boys under 16 committed by the courts must be accepted by the institution. The population of the boys' department on December 31, 1932, was approximately 400, although the child-welfare department recommended that because of the limitations of the equipment of the school only about 300 boys should be in residence. The intake of girls was definitely limited by the size of the building available, only 26 girls being under care on this date. Both boys and girls were under commitment until they reached 18 years of age.

The school was handicapped by the limitations of the funds. Only \$10 per capita per month was allowed for its support. In 1932 this

⁸⁰ Code of 1923, sec. 56.

⁸¹ General Acts of 1932 (extra session), No. 328, p. 328.

^{81a} General Acts of 1935, No. 373, subsec. X (5), p. 797.

⁸² General Acts of 1911, No. 336, p. 677; 1919, No. 442, p. 670; 1931, No. 583, p. 670.

was reduced to \$2 a week, with the total yearly expenditures not to exceed \$38,426.⁸³ In 1935 an annual appropriation of \$40,000 was made.^{83a} Academic education through the junior high school was provided for all boys and girls, 10 teachers being employed. Little vocational training was given other than farm work for the boys and housework for the girls.

State training school for girls.

The State training school for girls was established in 1911 under a board of managers composed of the Governor, the attorney general, and 12 women. Dissatisfaction with the administration of this institution resulted in a study by a legislative committee and the enactment in 1931 of a law to "re-create the State training school for girls."⁸⁴ This act placed the institution under the control of a board of trustees consisting of the Governor as chairman and 12 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the senate (one member from each congressional district of the State and 3 from Jefferson County, in which the institution was situated). An executive committee transacted business during the interim between meetings of the board. Under the provisions of the 1931 law the superintendent was required to be a college graduate, or to have equivalent education, and to have had training and experience in social work and in institution management.

Girls between 12 and 18 years of age committed as delinquent by the juvenile courts were admitted to the institution, and unless they were discharged, paroled, or transferred, were kept under care until they reached the age of 21 years. In 1932 the school had a capacity of about 120 girls. The new administration brought about great progress in the service given by the school. The plant was improved, and greater variety in vocational training was provided.

The 1931 law changed the financing of the school from \$330 per capita previously allowed to a general appropriation for maintenance of \$50,000. In 1934 an appropriation of \$40,000 was made. This was the same as that made for the reform school for juvenile Negro law-breakers, which had more than three times the number of children under care.

OTHER SERVICES FOR DELINQUENT CHILDREN

Social service to the State schools.

Each of the two schools for delinquent white children (the boys' industrial school and the training school for girls) had a field worker who cooperated closely with county superintendents of child welfare in supervising children paroled from these schools. Much time was also spent by these officers in getting adequate records and information about the girls and boys admitted to the institutions and in working out plans for parole. The school for Negro boys and girls had no similar service.

In 1931 the State child-welfare department was given the responsibility of inspecting the institutions and consulting with the superintendents and managing boards as to methods of fitting the institution program into a more adequate State service. The relation

⁸³ General Acts (extra session) of 1932, No. 328, p. 328.

^{83a} General Acts of 1935, No. 373, subsec. X (3), p. 797.

⁸⁴ General Acts of 1931, No. 227, p. 272.

of the department to the State training school for girls had been especially close, as the department served the school during the period of reorganization before the new administration took charge and was an important factor in the development of a more satisfactory program. The department was also active in building up local resources for the care of children who came into conflict with the law, so that commitments to the schools for delinquents might be reduced to a minimum.

Supervision of local services for delinquent children.

The work of the State child-welfare department was closely related to probation work throughout the State. In 1931 the Juvenile Court Act was amended to read, "In order to unify and standardize probation work in the juvenile courts of the State, the State child-welfare commission is hereby empowered to prescribe reasonable standards of education, training, and experience" for probation officers. In addition, one of the duties of the State child-welfare department was to consult with the judge and probation officers of the juvenile courts of the several counties of the State and to aid in perfecting the organization and work of such courts.⁸⁵ The general supervision of the local units in the State by the child-welfare department necessarily brought the department into close contact with the probation work because one of the principal duties of the county superintendent of child welfare was to serve as probation officer for the juvenile court of the county.

The State department was also responsible for the inspection of the work of four local public institutions (three in Mobile County and one in Jefferson County) that were caring for delinquent children. The use of detention homes for the care of dependent children and for long-time care of children with conduct difficulties was a practice that the department was trying to discourage.

CARE OF PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN

Education for blind and deaf children was provided in three State residential schools located about one-half mile apart. The three schools were under the direction of one superintendent. One school cared for blind white children, another for deaf white children, and the third for Negro children who were either blind or deaf. These three institutions, originally under separate administrations, were incorporated under the school code into one unit, the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind.⁸⁶ The institute was managed and controlled by a board of trustees consisting of the Governor, who was chairman ex officio, the State superintendent of education, and 12 other persons appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the senate.

During the school year 1930-31, 158 blind white children, 351 deaf white children, 41 blind Negro children, and 68 deaf Negro children were attending these schools.⁸⁷ The schools gave academic training

⁸⁵ General Acts of 1931, No. 316, p. 366.

⁸⁶ School Code, 1927, sec. 577.

⁸⁷ State and Private Schools for the Deaf, 1930-31, p. 14. Circular No. 75. U. S. Office of Education. Washington, 1933. (Mimeographed.) State and Private Schools for the Blind, 1930-31, p. 8. Circular No. 70. U. S. Office of Education. Washington, 1933. (Mimeographed.)

through 11 grades, as well as prevocational training and some vocational work. Per capita payments of \$296 a year were allowed for the maintenance of these schools in 1932.⁸⁸

State services for blind persons, similar to those provided in other States by State commissions for the blind or by divisions for the blind of the State departments of welfare, were given by the civilian-rehabilitation service of the department of education. This service, authorized in 1927,⁸⁹ included the maintenance of a register of blind persons in the State, home training for blind persons and assistance in marketing the products of their work, and a program of sight conservation. A survey was made throughout the State to locate all blind persons, and in 1931 the register included 955 totally blind persons and 1,025 persons whose vision was so seriously impaired that they were greatly handicapped.⁹⁰

As part of the conservation work of the civilian rehabilitation service the official in charge of services for the blind organized eye clinics. At his suggestion the county health officer presented the project to the county medical society, which selected an eye specialist who would donate his service to the proposed clinic. Nineteen leading eye specialists of the South gave free services, and several hospitals gave free treatment to those unable to pay. Before a clinic was held in a community, school records were examined for children with eye defects. Visits were then made by the State agent to the homes of children with defective vision to explain to their parents the purpose of the clinic. After the clinic the agent again visited the parents to interpret to them the doctor's diagnosis. Lions clubs and other civic organizations contributed funds to supplement the small State fund available and gave service in transporting patients to clinics and hospitals. Follow-up work was done through county health units and county superintendents of child welfare.

In addition to clinics, the service for blind children included instruction given to teachers and pupils on the care of the eyes, talks given to parent-teacher associations, and literature distributed to the public. The State health law requires doctors, nurses, and midwives to use silver nitrate or other prophylactics in the eyes of newborn babies. Prophylactics were furnished free by the State department of health.

CRIPPLED CHILDREN ⁹¹

In the spring of 1926 the State superintendent of education, the State health officer, and the director of the State child-welfare department worked out a plan for State aid for crippled children. It was agreed that the three departments would act as sponsor for the establishment of a private organization, the Alabama Society for Crippled Children, which was to obtain funds for services through private contributions and develop public interest in crippled children.

⁸⁸ General Acts (extra session) of 1932, No. 328, p. 328.

⁸⁹ General Acts of 1927, No. 615, p. 712, as amended by General Acts of 1931, No. 678, p. 814.

⁹⁰ Annual Report for the Scholastic Year Ending June 30, 1931. State of Alabama, Department of Education, Bulletin, 1932, No. 11, p. 189. Montgomery.

⁹¹ Under the Social Security Act, Federal funds are made available to assist the States in the development of services for crippled children, and Alabama is participating in this program.

The need for participation and sponsorship by State officials was recognized in the constitution of the society, which provided that the supervisor of civilian rehabilitation of the State department of education should serve as executive secretary of the society and that the State health officer should be its medical adviser *ex officio*.

During the first year, work for crippled children was financed entirely from membership dues of the society or from gifts, but in 1927, \$15,000 of State civilian rehabilitation funds was made available for care of crippled persons, which included crippled children. The annual State appropriation for this purpose was reduced to \$5,000 in 1932, but in 1935 it was increased to \$40,000.⁹² The work financed by these joint funds included the holding of diagnostic clinics throughout the State and treatment and hospitalization of as many children as possible who needed such care.

In 1926 the State health officer solicited the help of all orthopedic surgeons of Alabama in holding diagnostic clinics at various centers in the State and in providing treatment for the crippled children brought to them. The State was divided into districts with three to five counties in each district. Arrangements were made to hold a clinic at some logical center in each district on the invitation of the medical society of that county. It took more than a year to cover the State the first time because much time was consumed in organization. The assistant to the supervisor of civilian rehabilitation, in charge of the physical restoration work, organized these clinics. In 1931, 26 clinics were held at which diagnoses were made in new cases and progress was observed in cases under treatment. No treatment was given in the clinics. A report submitted in 1931 noted that operations were needed in 600 cases and suggested that funds raised by the Alabama Society for Crippled Children should be used for this purpose.⁹³

Crippled children seen in the clinics were followed up by county and city public-health nurses and by county superintendents of child welfare. In some counties superintendents of child welfare provided social services for these children.

⁹² General Acts of 1927, No. 382, p. 454 (sec. 25) ; (extra session) 1932, No. 292, p. 291 (sec. 9) ; 1935, No. 309, p. 742 (sec. 1).

⁹³ Annual Report for the Scholastic Year Ending June 30, 1931. State of Alabama Department of Education, Bulletin, 1932, No. 11, p. 188. Montgomery.



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 05708 5621

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 05708 5696

MS. A. 1. 1. 1. 1.

